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THE FREETHINKER'S

TEXT-BOOK.

EDITED BY

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PART II.

CHRISTIANITY.

BY ANNIE BESANT.

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Christian society " ("On the Canon," preface, pp. xxxviii., xxxix). Mr. Sanday speaks of the "original documents out of which our Gospel was composed" ("Gospels in the Second Century," page 78), and he writes: "Doubtless light would be thrown upon the question if we only knew what was the common original of the two Synoptic texts" (Ibid, p. 65). "The first three Gospels of our Canon are remarkably alike, their writers agree in relating the same thing, not only in the same manner, but likewise in the very words, as must be evident to every common reader who has paid the slightest attention to the subject.....[Here follow a number of parallel passages from the three synoptics.] The agreement between the three evangelists in these extracts is remarkable, and leads to the question how such coincidences could arise between works which, from the first years of Christianity until the beginning of the seventeenth century, were understood to be perfectly independent, and to have had each a separate and independent origin. The answer to this question may at last, after more than a hundred years of discussion, be given with tolerable certainty, if we are allowed to judge of this subject according to the rules of reason and common sense, by which all other such difficulties are resolved. 'The most eminent critics'—we quote from "Marsh's Michaelis," vol. iii., part 2, page 170—'are at present decidedly of opinion that one of the two suppositions must necessarily be adopted—either that the three evangelists copied from each other, or that all the three drew from *a common source*, and that the notion of an absolute independence, in respect to the composition of our three first Gospels, is no longer tenable'.....The alternative between *a common source* and *copying from each other*, is now no longer in the same position as in the days of Michaelis or Bishop Marsh. To decide between the two is no longer difficult. No one will now admit that either of the four evangelists has copied from the other three. 1. Because in neither of the four is there the slightest notice of the others. 2. Because, if either of the evangelists may be thought, from the remarkable similarity of any particular part of his narrative, to have copied out of either of the other Gospels, we immediately light upon so many other passages, wholly inconsistent with what the other three have related on the same subject, that we immediately ask why he has not copied from the others on those points also. It only remains,

therefore, for us to infer that there was a common source, first traditional and then written—the Ἀπομνημονεύματα, in short, or 'Memorials,' etc., of Justin Martyr, and that from this source the four canonical Gospels, together with thirty or forty others, many of which are still in existence, were, at various periods of early Christianity, compiled by various writers" ("Christian Records," Dr. Giles, pp. 266, 270, 271). Dean Alford puts forward a somewhat similar theory; he considers that the oral teaching of the apostles to catechumens and others, the simple narrative of facts relating to Christ, gradually grew into form and was written down, and that this accounts for the marked similarity of some passages in the different Gospels. He says:—"I believe, then, that the Apostles, in virtue not merely of their having been eye-and-ear witnesses of the Evangelic history, but especially of *their office*, gave to the various Churches their testimony in *a narrative of facts*, such narrative being modified in each case by the individual mind of the Apostle himself, and his sense of what was requisite for the particular community to which he was ministering. .....It would be easy and interesting to follow the probable origin and growth of this cycle of narratives of the words and deeds of our Lord in the Church at Jerusalem, for both the Jews and the Hellenists—the latter under such teachers as Philip and Stephen—commissioned and authenticated by the Apostles. In the course of such a process some portions would naturally be written down by private believers for their own use, or that of friends. And as the Church spread to Samaria, Cæsarea, and Antioch, the want would be felt in each of those places of similar cycles of oral teaching, which, when supplied, would thenceforward belong to, and be current in, those respective Churches. And these portions of the Evangelic history, oral or partially documentary, would be adopted under the sanction of the Apostles, who were as in all things, so especially in this, the appointed and divinely-guided overseers of the whole Church. This *common substratum of Apostolic teachings*—never formally adopted by all, but subject to all the varieties of diction and arrangement, addition and omission, incident to transmission through many individual minds, and into many different localities—*I believe to have been the original source of the common part of our three Gospels*" ("Greek Test.," Dean Alford, vol. i., Prolegomena, ch. i., sec. 3, par. 6; ed. 1859. The italics are Dean Alford's).

Eichhorn's theory of the growth of the Gospels is one very generally accepted; he considers that the present Gospels were not in common circulation before the end of the second century, and that before that time other Gospels were in common use, differing considerably from each other, but resting on a common foundation of historical fact; all these, he thinks, were versions of an "original Gospel," a kind of rough outline of Christ's life and discourses, put together without method or plan, and one of these would be the "Memoirs of the Apostles," of which Justin Martyr speaks. The Gospels, as we have them, are careful compilations made from these earlier histories, and we notice that, at the end of the second, and the beginning of the third, centuries, the leaders of the Church endeavour to establish the authority of the four more methodically arranged Gospels, so as to check the reception of other Gospels, which were relied upon by heretics in their controversies.

Strauss gives a careful *résumé* of the various theories of the formation of the Gospels held by learned men, and shows how the mythic theory was gradually developed and strengthened; "according to George, *mythus* is the creation of a fact out of an idea" ("Life of Jesus," Strauss, vol. i., p. 42; ed. 1846), and the mythic theory supposes that the ideas of the Messiah were already in existence, and that the story of the Gospels grew up by the translation of these ideas into facts: "Many of the legends respecting him [Jesus] had not to be newly invented; they already existed in the popular hope of the Messiah, having been mostly derived, with various modifications, from the Old Testament, and had merely to be transferred to Jesus, and accommodated to his character and doctrines. In no case could it be easier for the person who first added any new feature to the description of Jesus, to believe himself its genuineness, since his argument would be: Such and such things must have happened to the Messiah; Jesus was the Messiah; therefore, such and such things happened to him" (Ibid, pp. 81, 82). "It is not, however, to be imagined that any one individual seated himself at his table to invent them out of his own head, and write them down as he would a poem; on the contrary, these narratives, like all other legends, were fashioned by degrees, by steps which can no longer be traced; gradually acquired consistency, and at length received a fixed form in our written Gospels" (Ibid,

p. 35). From the considerations here adduced—the lack of quotations from our Gospels in the earliest Christian writers, both orthodox and heretical; the accusations against each made by the other of introducing changes and modifications in the Gospels; the facility with which MSS. were altered before the introduction of printing; the coincidences between the Gospels, showing that they are drawn from a common source; from all these facts we finally conclude *that there is no evidence that the Four Gospels mentioned about that date* (A.D. 180) *were the same as those we have now.*

C. *That there is evidence that two of them were not the same.* "The testimony of Papias is of great interest and importance in connection with our inquiry, inasmuch as he is the first ecclesiastical writer who mentions the tradition that Matthew and Mark composed written records of the life and teaching of Jesus; but no question has been more continuously contested than that of the identity of the works to which he refers with our actual Canonical Gospels. Papias was Bishop of Hierapolis, in Phrygia, in the first half of the second century, and is said to have suffered martyrdom under Marcus Aurelius about A.D. 164—167. About the middle of the second century he wrote a work in five books, entitled 'Exposition of the Lord's Oracles,' which, with the exception of a few fragments preserved to us chiefly by Eusebius and Irenæus, is unfortunately no longer extant. This work was less based on written records of the teaching of Jesus than on that which Papias had been able to collect from tradition, which he considered more authentic, for, like his contemporary, Hegesippus, Papias avowedly prefers tradition to any written works with which he was acquainted" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., pp. 449, 450). Before giving the testimony attributed to Papias, we must remark two or three points which will influence our judgment concerning him. Paley speaks of him, on the authority of Irenæus, as "a hearer of John, and companion of Polycarp" ("Evidences," p. 121); but Paley omits to tell us that Eusebius points out that Irenæus was mistaken in this statement, and that Papias "by no means asserts that he was a hearer and an eye-witness of the holy Apostles, but informs us that he received the doctrines of faith from their intimate friends" ("Eccles. Hist., bk. iii., ch. 39). Eusebius subjoins the passage from Papias, which states that "if I met with any one who

had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders: what was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip; what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; what was said by Aristion, and the Presbyter John, disciples of the Lord" (Ibid). Seeing that Papias died between A.D. 164 and 167, and that the disciples of Jesus were Jesus' own contemporaries, any disciple that Papias heard, when a boy, would have reached a portentous age, and, between the age of the disciple and the youth of Papias, the reminiscences would probably be of a somewhat hazy character. It is to Papias that we owe the wonderful account of the vines (ante, p. 234) of the kingdom of God, given by Irenæus, who states that "these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp.....And he says, in addition, 'Now these things are credible to believers.' And he says that 'when the traitor, Judas, did not give credit to them, and put the question, How then can things about to bring forth so abundantly be wrought by the Lord? the Lord declared, They who shall come to these (times) shall see'" ("Irenæus Against Heresies," bk. v., ch. 33, sec. 4). The recollections of Papias scarcely seem valuable as to quality. Next we note that Papias could scarcely put a very high value on the Apostolic writings, since he states that "I do not think that I derived so much benefit from books as from the living voice of those that are still surviving" ("Eccles. Hist.," bk. iii., ch. 39), *i.e.*, of those who had been followers of the Apostles. How this remark of Papias tallies with the supposed respect shown to the Canonical Gospels by primitive writers, it is for Christian apologists to explain. We then mark that we have no writing of Papias to refer to that pretends to be original. We have only passages, said to be taken from his writings, preserved in the works of Irenæus and Eusebius, and neither of these ecclesiastical penmen inspire the student with full confidence; even Eusebius mentions him in doubtful fashion; "there are said to be five books of Papias;" he gives "certain strange parables of our Lord and of his doctrine, and some other matters rather too fabulous;" "he was very limited in his comprehension, as is evident from his discourses" ("Eccles. Hist.," bk. iii., ch. 39). We thus see that the evidence of Papias is discredited at the very outset, perhaps to the advantage of the Christians, however, for his testimony is

fatal to the Canonical Gospels. Papias is said to have written: "And John the Presbyter also said this: Mark being the interpreter of Peter, whatsoever he recorded he wrote with great accuracy, but not, however, in the order in which it was spoken or done by our Lord, but as before said, he was in company with Peter, who gave him such instruction as was necessary, but not to give a history of our Lord's discourses; wherefore Mark has not erred in anything, by writing some things as he has recorded them; for he was carefully attentive to one thing, not to pass by anything that he heard, or to state anything falsely in these accounts" ("Eccles. Hist.," bk iii., ch. 39). How far does this account apply to the Gospel now known as "according to St. Mark?" Far from showing traces of Petrine influence, such traces are conspicuous by their absence. "Not only are some of the most important episodes in which Peter is represented by the other Gospels as a principal actor altogether omitted, but throughout the Gospel there is the total absence of anything which is specially characteristic of Petrine influence and teaching. The argument that these omissions are due to the modesty of Peter is quite untenable, for not only does Irenæus, the most ancient authority on the point, state that this Gospel was only written after the death of Peter, but also there is no modesty in omitting passages of importance in the history of Jesus, simply because Peter himself was in some way concerned in them, or, for instance, in decreasing his penitence for such a denial of his master, which could not but have filled a sad place in the Apostle's memory. On the other hand, there is no adequate record of special matter which the intimate knowledge of the doings and sayings of Jesus possessed by Peter might have supplied to counterbalance the singular omissions. There is infinitely more of the spirit of Peter in the first Gospel than there is in the second. The whole internal evidence, therefore, shows that this part of the tradition of the Presbyter John transmitted by Papias does not apply to our Gospel" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., pp. 459, 460). But a far stronger objection to the identity of the work spoken of by Papias with the present Gospel of Mark, is drawn from the description of the document as given by him. "The discrepancy, however, is still more marked when we compare with our actual second Gospel the account of the work of Mark, which Papias received from the Presbyter. Mark wrote down

from memory some parts (ἔνια) of the teaching of Peter regarding the life of Jesus, but as Peter adapted his instructions to the actual circumstances (πρὸς τὰς χρείας) and did not give a consecutive report (σύνταξις) of the discourses or doings of Jesus, Mark was only careful to be accurate, and did not trouble himself to arrange in historical order (τάξις) his narrative of the things which were said or done by Jesus, but merely wrote down facts as he remembered them. This description would lead us to expect a work composed of fragmentary reminiscences of the teaching of Peter, without orderly sequence or connection. The absence of orderly arrangement is the most prominent feature in the description, and forms the burden of the whole. Mark writes 'what he remembered;' 'he did not arrange in order the things that were either said or done by Christ;' and then follow the apologetic expressions of explanation—he was not himself a hearer or follower of the Lord, but derived his information from the occasional preaching of Peter, who did not attempt to give a consecutive narrative, and, therefore, Mark was not wrong in merely writing things without order as he happened to hear or remember them. Now it is impossible in the work of Mark here described to recognise our present second Gospel, which does not depart in any important degree from the order of the other two Synoptics, and which, throughout, has the most evident character of orderly arrangement.....The great majority of critics, therefore, are agreed in concluding that the account of the Presbyter John recorded by Papias does not apply to our second Canonical Gospel at all" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i. pp. 460, 461). "This document, also, is mentioned by Papias, as quoted by Eusebius; the account which they give of it is not applicable to the work which we now have. For the 'Gospel according to St. Mark' professes to give a continuous history of Christ's life, as regularly as the other three Gospels, but the work noticed by Papias is expressly stated to have been memoranda, taken down from time to time as Peter delivered them, and it is not said that Mark ever reduced these notes into the form of a more perfect history" ("Christian Records," Rev. Dr. Giles, pp. 94, 95). "It is difficult to see in what respects Mark's Gospel is more loose and disjointed than those of Matthew and Luke..... We are inclined to agree with those who consider the expression οὐ τάξει unsuitable to the present Gospel of Mark. As far as we are able to understand the entire frag-

ment, it is most natural to consider John the Presbyter or Papias assigning a sense to οὐ τάξει which does not agree with the character of the canonical document" ("Introduction to the New Testament," Dr. Davidson, p. 158). This Christian commentator is so disgusted with the conviction he honestly expresses as to the unsuitability of the phrase in question as applied to Mark, that he exclaims: "We presume that John the Presbyter was not infallible. .....In the present instance, he appears to have been mistaken in his opinion. His power of perception was feeble, else he would have seen that the Gospel which he describes as being written οὐ τάξει, does not differ materially in arrangement from that of Luke. Like Papias, the Presbyter was apparently destitute of critical ability and good judgment, else he could not have entertained an idea so much at variance with fact" (Ibid, p. 159). We may add, for what it is worth, that "according to the unanimous belief of the early Church this Gospel was written at *Rome.* Hence the conclusion was drawn that it must have been composed in *the language of the Romans;* that is, Latin. Even in the old Syriac version, a remark is annexed, stating that the writer preached the Gospel in Roman (Latin) at Rome; and the Philoxenian version has a marginal annotation to the same effect. The Syrian Churches seem to have entertained this opinion generally, as may be inferred not only from these versions, but from some of their most distinguished ecclesiastical writers, such as Ebedjesu. Many Greek Manuscripts, too, have a similar remark regarding the language of our Gospel, originally taken, perhaps from the Syriac" (Ibid, pp. 154, 155). We conclude, then, that the document alluded to by the Presbyter John, as reported by Papias through Eusebius, cannot be identical with the present canonical Gospel of Mark. Nor is the testimony regarding Matthew less conclusive: "Of Matthew he has stated as follows: 'Matthew composed his history in the Hebrew dialect, and every one translated it as he was able'" ("Eccles. Hist.," Eusebius, bk. iii., ch. 39). The word here translated "history" is τὰ λόγια, and would be more correctly rendered by "oracles" or "discourses," and much controversy has arisen over this term, it being contended that λόγια could not rightly be extended so as to include any records of the life of Christ: "It is impossible upon any but arbitrary grounds, and from a foregone conclusion,

to maintain that a work commencing with a detailed history of the birth and infancy of Jesus, his genealogy, and the preaching of John the Baptist, and concluding with an equally minute history of his betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection, and which relates all the miracles, and has for its evident aim throughout the demonstration that Messianic prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, could be entitled τὰ λόγια, the oracles or discourses of the Lord. For these and other reasons.....the majority of critics deny that the work described by Papias can be the same as the Gospel in our Canon bearing the name of Matthew" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., pp. 471, 472). But the fact which puts the difference between the present "Matthew" and that spoken of by Papias beyond dispute is that Matthew, according to Papias, "wrote in the Hebrew dialect," *i.e.*, the Syro-Chaldaic, or Aramæan, while the canonical Matthew is written in Greek. "There is no point, however, on which the testimony of the Fathers is more invariable and complete than that the work of Matthew was written in Hebrew or Aramaic" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., p. 475). This industrious author quotes Papias, Irenæus, Pantænus in Eusebius, Eusebius, Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Jerome, in support of his assertion, and remarks that "the same tradition is repeated by Chrysostom, Augustine and others" (Ibid, pp. 475—477). "We believe that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, meaning by that term the common language of the Jews of his time, because such is the uniform statement of all ancient writers who advert to the subject. To pass over others whose authority is of less weight, he is affirmed to have written in Hebrew by Papias, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome. Nor does any ancient author advance a contrary opinion" (Genuineness of the Gospels," Norton, vol. i., pp. 196, 197). "Ancient historical testimony is unanimous in declaring that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, *i.e.*, in the Aramæan or Syro-Chaldaic language, at that time the vernacular tongue of the Jews in Palestine" (Davidson's "Introduction to the New Testament," p. 3). After a most elaborate presentation of the evidences, the learned doctor says: "Let us now pause to consider this account of the original Gospel of Matthew. It runs through all antiquity. None doubted of its truth, as far as we can judge from their writings. There is not the least trace of an opposite tradition" (Ibid, p. 37). The difficulty of Christian apologists is, then,

to prove that the Gospel written by Matthew in Hebrew is the same as the Gospel according to Matthew in Greek, and sore have been the shifts to which they have been driven in the effort. Dean Alford, unable to deny that all the testimony which could be relied upon to prove that Matthew wrote at all, also proved that he wrote in Hebrew, and aware that an unauthorised translation, which could not be identified with the original, could never claim canonicity, fell back on the remarkable notion that he himself translated his Hebrew Gospel into Greek; in the edition of his Greek Testament published in 1859, however, he gives up this notion in favour of the idea that the original Gospel of Matthew was written in Greek.

Of his earlier theory of translation by Matthew, Davidson justly says: "It is easy to perceive its gratuitous character. It is a clumsy expedient, devised for the purpose of uniting two conflicting opinions—for saving the credit of ancient testimony, which is on the side of a Hebrew original, and of meeting, at the same time, the difficulties supposed to arise from the early circulation of the Greek.....The advocates of the double hypothesis go in the face of ancient testimony. Besides, they believe that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, for the use of Jewish converts. Do they also suppose his Greek Gospel to have been intended for the same class? If so, the latter was plainly unnecessary: one Gospel was sufficient for the same persons. Or do they believe that the second edition of it was designed for Gentile Christians? if so, the notion is contradicted by internal evidence, which proves that it was written specially for Jews. In short, the hypothesis is wholly untenable, and we are surprised that it should have found so many advocates" ("Introduction to the New Testament," p. 52). The fact is, that no one knows who was the translator—or, rather, the writer—of the Greek Gospel. Jerome honestly says that it is not known who translated it into Greek. Dr. Davidson has the following strange remarks: "The author indeed must ever remain unknown; but whether he were an apostle or not, he must have had the highest sanction in his proceeding. His work was performed with the cognisance, and under the eye of Apostolic men. The reception it met with proved the general belief of his calling, and competency to the task. Divine superintendence was exercised over him" (Ibid, pp. 72, 73). It is difficult to understand how Dr. Davidson knows that divine super-

intendence was exercised over an unknown individual. Dr. Giles argues against the hypothesis that our Greek Gospel is a translation: "If St. Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, why has the original perished? The existing Greek text is either a translation of the Hebrew, or it is a separate work. But it cannot be a translation, for many reasons. 1. Because there is not the slightest evidence on record of its being a translation. 2. Because it is unreasonable to believe that an authentic work—written by inspiration—would perish, or be superseded by, an unauthenticated translation—for all translations are less authentic than their originals. 3. Because there are many features in our present Gospel according to St. Matthew, which are common to the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke; which would lead to the inference that the latter are translations also. Besides, there is nothing in the Gospel of St. Matthew, as regards its style or construction, that would lead to the inference of its being a translation, any more than all the other books contained in the New Testament. For these reasons we conclude that the 'Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew,' which perhaps no one has seen since Pantænus, who brought it from India, and the 'Greek Gospel according to St. Matthew,' are separate and independent works" ("Christian Records." Rev. Dr. Giles, pp. 93, 94). It must not be forgotten that there was in existence in the early Church a Hebrew Gospel which was widely spread, and much used. It was regarded by the Ebionites, or Jewish Christians, later known as Nazarenes, as the only authentic Gospel, and Epiphanius, writing in the fourth century, says: "They have the Gospel of Matthew very complete; for it is well known that this is preserved among them as it was first written in Hebrew" ("Opp.," i. 124, as quoted by Norton). But this Gospel, known as the "Gospel according to the Hebrews," was not the same as the Greek "Gospel according to St. Matthew." If it had been the same, Jerome would not have thought it worth while to translate it; the quotations that he makes from it are enough to prove to demonstration that the present Gospel of Matthew is not that spoken of in the earliest days. "The following positions are deducible from St. Jerome's writings: 1. The authentic Gospel of Matthew was written in Hebrew. 2. The Gospel according to the Hebrews was used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites. 3. This Gospel was identical with the Aramæan

original of Matthew" (Davidson's "Introduction to the New Testament," p. 12). To these arguments may be added the significant fact that the quotations in Matthew from the Old Testament are taken from the Septuagint, and not from the Hebrew version. The original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew would surely not have contained quotations from the Greek translation, rather than from the Hebrew original, of the Jewish Scriptures. If our present Gospel is an accurate translation of the original Matthew, we must believe that the Jewish Matthew, writing for Jews, did not use the Hebrew Scriptures, with which his readers would be familiar, but went out of his way to find the hated Septuagint, and re-translated it into Hebrew. Thus we find that the boasted testimony said to be recorded by Papias to the effect that Matthew and Mark wrote our two first synoptical Gospels breaks down completely under examination, and that instead of proving the authenticity of the present Gospels, it proves directly the reverse, since the description there given of the writings ascribed to Matthew and Mark is not applicable to the writings that now bear their names, so that we find that in Papias *there is evidence that two of the Gospels were not the same.*

H. *That there is evidence that the earlier records were not the Gospels now esteemed Canonical.* This position is based on the undisputed fact that the "Evangelical quotations" in early Christian writings differ very widely from sentences of somewhat similar character in the Canonical Gospels, and also from the circumstance that quotations not to be found in the Canonical Gospels are found in the writings referred to. Various theories are put forward, as we have already seen, to account for the differences of expression and arrangement: the Fathers are said to have quoted loosely, to have quoted from memory, to have combined, expanded, condensed, at pleasure. To prove this general laxity of quotation, Christian apologists rely much on what they assert is a similar laxity shown in quoting from the Old Testament; and Mr. Sanday has used this argument with considerable skill. But it does not follow that variations in quotations from the Old Testament spring from laxity and carelessness; they are generally quite as likely to spring from multiplicity of versions, for we find Mr. Sanday himself saying that "most of the quotations that we meet with are taken from the LXX. Version; and the text of that version was, at this particular time especially,

uncertain and fluctuating. There is evidence to show that it must have existed in several forms, which differed more or less from that of the extant MSS. It would be rash, therefore, to conclude at once, because we find a quotation differing from the present text of the LXX., that it differed from that which was used by the writer making the quotation" ("Gospels in the Second Century," pp. 16, 17). Besides, it must not be forgotten that the variation is sometimes too persistent to spring from looseness of quotation, and that the same variation is not always confined to one author. The position for which we contend will be most clearly appreciated by giving, at full length, one of the passages most relied upon by Christian apologists; and we will take, as an example of supposed quotation, the long passage in Clement, chap. xiii.:—

MATTHEW.	CLEMENT.	LUKE.
	Especially remembering the word of the Lord Jesus which he spake, teaching gentleness and long-suffering. For thus he said:	
v. 7. Blessed are the pitiful, for they shall be pitied.	Pity ye, that ye may be pitied: forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you.	vi. 36. Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your Father also is merciful.
vi. 14. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.	As ye do, so shall it be done unto you; as ye give, so shall it be given unto you; as ye judge, so shall it be judged unto you; as ye are kind, so shall kindness be shown unto you: with what measure ye mete, with it shall it be measured unto you.	vi. 37. Acquit, and ye shall be acquitted.
vii. 12. All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them.		vi. 31. And as ye would that they should do unto you, do ye also unto them likewise.
vii. 2. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you.		vi. 18. Give, and it shall be given unto you.
		vi. 37. And judge not, and ye shall not be judged. For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again.

The English, as here given, represents as closely as possible both the resemblances and the differences of the Greek

text. What reader, in reading this, can believe that Clement picked out a bit here and a bit there from the Canonical Gospels, and then wove them into one connected whole, which he forthwith represented as said thus by Christ? To the unprejudiced student the hypothesis will, at once, suggest itself—there must have been some other document current in Clement's time, which contained the sayings of Christ, from which this quotation was made. Only the exigencies of Christian apologetic work forbid the general adoption of so simple and so natural a solution of the question. Mr. Sanday says: "Doubtless light would be thrown upon the question if we only knew what was the common original of the two Synoptic texts.....The differences in these extra-Canonical quotations do not exceed the differences between the Synoptic Gospels themselves; yet by far the larger proportion of critics regard the resemblances in the Synoptics as due to a common written source used either by all three or by two of them" ("Gospels in the Second Century," p. 65). It is clear that Jesus could not have said these passages in the words given by Matthew, Clement, and Luke, repeating himself in three different forms, now connectedly, now in fragments; two, at least, out of the three must give an imperfect report. Mr. Sanday, by speaking of "the common original of the two Synoptic texts," clearly shows that he does not regard the Synoptic version as original, and thereby helps to buttress our contention, that the Gospels we have now are not the only ones that were current in the early Church, and that they had no exclusive authority—in fact, that they were not "Canonical." Further on, Mr. Sanday, referring to Polycarp, says: "I cannot but think that there has been somewhere a written version different from our Gospels to which he and Clement have had access.....It will be observed that all the quotations refer either to the double or treble Synoptics, where we have already proof of the existence of the saying in question in more than a single form, and not to those portions that are peculiar to the individual Evangelists. The author of 'Supernatural Religion' is, therefore, not without reason when he says that they may be derived from other collections than our actual Gospels. The possibility cannot be excluded" ("Gospels in the Second Century," pp. 86, 87). The other passage from Clement is yet more unlike anything in the Canonical Gospels: in chap. xlvi. we read:—

MATTHEW.	CLEMENT.	LUKE.	MARK.
xxvi. 24. Woe to that man by whom the Son of man is delivered up; well for him if that man had not been born.	He said: Woe to that man; well for him that he had not been born than that he should offend one of my elect; better for him a millstone should be attached (to him), and he should be drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of my little ones.	xvii. 1. Woe through whom they (offences) come. 2. It were advantageous for him that a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast in the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.	xiv. 21. Woe to that man by whom the Son of man is delivered up, well for him if that man had not been born. ix. 42. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it is well for him rather that a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he thrown in the sea.

"This quotation is clearly not from our Gospels, but is derived from a different written source..... The slightest comparison of the passage with our Gospels is sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind that it is neither a combination of texts, nor a quotation from memory. The language throughout is markedly different, and, to present even a superficial parallel, it is necessary to take a fragment of the discourse of Jesus at the Last Supper, regarding the traitor who should deliver him up (Matt. xxvi. 24), and join it to a fragment of his remarks in connection with the little child whom he set in the midst (xviii. 6)" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., pp. 233, 234).

In Polycarp a passage is found much resembling that given from Clement, chap. xiii., but not exactly reproducing it, which is open to the same criticism as that passed on Clement.

If we desire to prove that Gospels other than the Canonical were in use, the proof lies ready to our hands. In chap. xlvi. of Clement we read: "It is written, cleave to the holy, for they who cleave to them shall be made holy." In chap. xliv.: "And our Apostles knew, through

our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contention regarding the office of the episcopate." The author of "Supernatural Religion" gives us passages somewhat resembling this. He said: "There shall be schisms and heresies," from Justin Martyr ("Trypho," chap. xxxv): "There shall be, as the Lord said, false apostles, false prophets, heresies, desires for supremacy," from the "Clementine Homilies": "From these came the false Christs, false prophets, false apostles, who divided the unity of the Church," from Hegesippus (vol. i. p. 236).

In Barnabas we read, chap. vi.: "The Lord saith, He maketh a new creation in the last times. The Lord saith, Behold I make the first as the last." Chap. vii.: Jesus says: "Those who desire to behold me, and to enter into my kingdom, must, through tribulation and suffering, lay hold upon me."

In Ignatius we find: Ep. Phil., chap. vii.: "But the Spirit proclaimed, saying these words: Do ye nothing without the Bishop." "There is, however, one quotation, introduced as such, in this same Epistle, the source of which Eusebius did not know, but which Origen refers to 'the Preaching of Peter,' and Jerome seems to have found in the Nazarene version of the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews." This phrase is attributed to our Lord when he appeared 'to those about Peter and said to them, Handle me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit.' But for the statement of Origen, that these words occurred in the 'Preaching of Peter,' they might have been referred without much difficulty to Luke xxiv. 39" ("Gospels in the Second Century," p. 81). And they most certainly would have been so referred, and dire would have been Christian wrath against those who refused to admit these words as a proof of the canonicity of Luke's Gospel in the time of Ignatius.

If, turning to Justin Martyr, we take one or two passages resembling other passages to be found in the Canonical, we shall then see the same type of differences as we have already remarked in Clement. In the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the first "Apology" we find a collection of the sayings of Christ, most of which are to be read in the Sermon on the Mount; in giving these Justin mentions no written work from which he quotes. He says: "We consider it right, before giving you the promised explanation, to cite a few precepts given by Christ himself" ("Apology," chap. xiv). If these had been taken from

Gospels written by Apostles, is it conceivable that Justin would not have used their authority to support himself?

MATTHEW.	JUSTIN.
v. 46. For if ye should love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?	And of our love to all, he taught thus: If ye love them that love ye, what new things do ye? for even fornicators do this; but I say unto you: Pray for your enemies, and love them which hate you, and bless them which curse you, and offer prayer for them which despitefully use you.
v. 44. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them which curse you, do good to them which hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.	

The corresponding passage in Luke is still further from Justin (Luke vi. 32—35). "It will be observed that here again Justin's Gospel reverses the order in which the parallel passage is found in our synoptics. It does so indeed, with a clearness of design which, even without the actual peculiarities of diction and construction, would indicate a special and different source. The passage varies throughout from our Gospels, but Justin repeats the same phrases in the same order elsewhere" ("Sup. Rel.," v. i. p. 353, note 2).

MATTHEW.	JUSTIN.
v. 42. Give thou to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.	He said: Give ye to every one that asketh, and from him that desireth to borrow turn not ye away: for if ye lend to them from whom ye hope to receive, what new thing do ye? for even the publicans do this.
Luke vi. 34. And if you lend to them from whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye; for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again.	
Matt. vi. 19, 20. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.	But ye, lay not up for yourselves upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and robbers break through, but lay up for yourselves in the heavens, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.
xvi. 26. For what shall a man be profited if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his	For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, but destroy his soul? or

MATTHEW.	JUSTIN.
soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?	what shall he give in exchange for it? Lay up, therefore, in the heavens, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.

This passage is clearly unbroken in Justin, and forms one connected whole; to parallel it from the Synoptics we must go from Matthew v., 42, to Luke vi., 34, then to Matthew vi., 19, 20, off to Matthew xvi. 26, and back again to Matthew vi. 19; is such a method of quotation likely, especially when we notice that Justin, in quoting passages on a given subject (as at the beginning of chap. xv. on chastity), separates the quotations by an emphatic "And," marking the quotation taken from another place? These passages will show the student how necessary it is that he should not accept a few words as proof of a quotation from a synoptic, without reading the whole passage in which they occur. The coincidence of half a dozen words is no quotation when the context is different, and there is no break between the context and the words relied upon. "It is absurd and most arbitrary to dissect a passage, quoted by Justin as a consecutive and harmonious whole, and finding parallels more or less approximate to its various phrases scattered up and down distant parts of our Gospels, scarcely one of which is not materially different from the reading of Justin, to assert that he is quoting these Gospels freely from memory, altering, excising, combining, and interweaving texts, and introverting their order, but nevertheless making use of them and not of others. It is perfectly obvious that such an assertion is nothing but the merest assumption" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., p. 364). Mr. Sanday's conclusion as to Justin is: "The *à priori* probabilities of the case, as well as the actual phenomena of Justin's Gospel, alike tend to show that he did make use either mediately or immediately of our Gospels, but that he did not assign to them an exclusive authority, and that he probably made use along with them of other documents no longer extant" ("Gospels in the Second Century," p. 117). It is needless to multiply analyses of quotations, as the system applied to the two given above can be carried out for himself by the student in other cases. But a far weightier proof remains that Justin's "Memoirs of the Apostles" were not the Canonical Gospels; and that is, that Justin used expressions, and mentions incidents which are *not* to be found in our Gospels,

and some of which *are* to be found in Apocryphal Gospels. For instance, in the first "Apology," chap. xiii., we read: "We have been taught that the only honour that is worthy of him is not to consume by fire what he has brought into being for our sustenance, but to use it for ourselves and those who need, and with gratitude to him to offer thanks by invocations and hymns for our creation, and for all the means of health, and for the various qualities of the different kinds of things, and for the changes of the seasons; and to present before him petitions for our existing again in incorruption through faith in him. Our teacher of these things is Jesus Christ, who also was born for this purpose." "He has exhorted us to lead all men, by patience and gentleness, from shame and the love of evil" (Ibid, chap. xvi.). "For the foal of an ass stood *bound to a vine*" (Ibid, chap. xxxii.). "The angel said to the *Virgin*, Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins" (chap. xxxiii.). "They tormented him, and set him on the judgment seat, and said, Judge us" (chap. xxxv.). "Our Lord Jesus Christ said, In whatsoever things I shall take you, in these I shall judge you" ("Trypho," chapter xlviii.). These are only some out of the many passages of which no resemblance is to be found in the Canonical Gospels.

The best way to show the truth of Paley's contention—that "from Justin's works, which are still extant, might be collected a tolerably complete account of Christ's life, in all points agreeing with that which is delivered in our Scriptures; taken indeed, in a great measure, from those Scriptures, but still proving that this account and no other, was the account known and extant in that age." ("Evidences," p. 77)—will be to give the story from Justin, mentioning every notice of Christ in his works, which gives anything of his supposed life, only omitting passages relating solely to his teaching, such as those given above. The large majority of these are taken from the "Dialogue with Trypho," a wearisome production, in which Justin endeavours to convince a Jew that Christ is the Messiah, by quotations from the Jewish Scriptures (which, by the way, include Esdras, thus placing that book on a level with the other inspired volumes). A noticeable peculiarity of this Dialogue is, that any alleged incident in Christ's life is taken as true, not because it is authenticated as historical, but simply because it was prophesied of; Justin's Christ is, in fact, an ideal, composed

out of the prophecies of the Jews, and fitted on to a Jew named Jesus.

Christ was the offspring truly brought forth from the Father, before the creation of anything else, the Word begotten of God, before all his works, and he appeared before his birth, sometimes as a flame of fire, sometimes as an angel, as at Sodom, to Moses, to Joshua. He was called by Solomon, Wisdom; and by the Prophets and by Christians, the King, the Eternal Priest, God, Lord, Angel, Man, the Flower, the Stone, the Cornerstone, the Rod, the Day, the East, the Glory, the Rock, the Sword, Jacob, Israel, the Captain, the Son, the Helper, the Redeemer. He was born into the World by the over-shadowing of God the Holy Ghost, who is none other than the Word himself, and produced without sexual union by a virgin of the seed of Jacob, Judah, Phares, Jesse, and David, his birth being announced by an angel, who told the Virgin to call his name Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. Joseph, the spouse of Mary, desired to put her away, but was commanded in a vision not to put away his wife, the angel telling him that what was in her womb was of the Holy Ghost. At the first census taken in Judæa, under Cyrenius, the first Roman Procurator, he left Nazareth where he lived, and went to Bethlehem, to which he belonged, his family being of the tribe of Judah, and then was ordered to proceed to Egypt with Mary and the child, and remain there until another revelation warned them to return to Judæa. At Bethlehem Joseph could find no lodging in the village, so took up his quarters in a cave near, where Christ was born and placed in a manger. Here he was found by the Magi from Arabia, who had been to Jerusalem inquiring what king was born there, they having seen a star rise in heaven. They worshipped the child and gave him gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and warned by a revelation, went home without telling Herod where they had found the child. So Herod, when Joseph, Mary, and the child had gone into Egypt, as they were commanded, ordered the whole of the children then in Bethlehem to be massacred. Archelaus succeeded Herod, and was succeeded himself by another Herod. The child grew up like all other men, and was a man without comeliness, and inglorious, working as a car-

penter, making ploughs and yokes, and when he was thirty years of age, more or less, he went to Jordan to be baptised by John, who was the herald of his approach. When he stepped into the water a fire was kindled in the Jordan, and when he came out of the water the Holy Ghost lighted on him like a dove, and at the same instant a voice came from the heavens: "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." He was tempted by Satan, and of like passions with men; he was spotless and sinless, and the blameless and righteous man; he made whole the lame, the paralytic, and those born blind, and he raised the dead; he was called, because of his mighty works, a magician, and a deceiver of the people. He stood in the midst of his brethren the Apostles, and when living with them sang praises unto God. He changed the names of the sons of Zebedee to Boanerges, and of another of the Apostles to Peter. He ordered his acquaintance to bring him an ass, and the foal of an ass which stood bound to a vine, and he mounted and rode into Jerusalem. He overthrew the tables of the money-changers in the temple. He gave us bread and wine in remembrance of his taking our flesh and of shedding his blood. He took upon him the curses of all, and by his stripes the human race is healed. On the day in which he was to be crucified (elsewhere called the night before) he took three disciples to the hill called Olivet, and prayed; his sweat fell to the ground like drops, his heart and also his bones trembling; men went to the Mount of Olives to seize him; he was seized on the day of the Passover, and crucified during the Passover; Pilate sent Jesus bound to Herod; before Pilate he kept silence; they set Christ on the judgment seat, and said: "Judge us;" he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; his hands and feet were pierced; they cast lots for his vesture, and divided it; they that saw him crucified, shook their heads and mocked him, saying: "Let him who raised the dead save himself." "He said he was the Son of God; let him come down; let God save him." He gave up his spirit to the Father, and after he was crucified all his acquaintance forsook him, having denied him. He rose on the third day; he was crucified on Friday, and rose on "the day of the Sun," and appeared to the Apostles

and taught them to read the prophecies, and they repented of their flight, after they were persuaded by himself that he had beforehand warned them of his sufferings, and that these sufferings were prophesied of. They saw him ascend. The rulers in heaven were commanded to admit the King of Glory, but seeing him uncomely and dishonoured they asked, "Who is this King of Glory?" God will keep Christ in heaven until he has subdued his enemies the devils. He will return in glory, raise the bodies of the dead, clothe the good with immortality, and send the bad, endued with eternal sensibility into everlasting fire. He has the everlasting kingdom.

These references to Jesus are scattered up and down through Justin's writings, without any chronological order, a phrase here, a phrase there; only in one or two instances are two or three things related even in the same chapter. They are arranged here connectedly, as nearly as possible in the usually accepted order, and the greatest care has been taken not to omit any. It will be worth while to note the differences between this and our Gospels, and also the allusions to other Gospels which it contains. Christ is clearly subsequent in time to the Father, being brought forth from him; he conceives himself, he being here identified with the Holy Ghost; it is the *virgin* who descends from David, a fact of which there is no hint given in our Gospels; the reason of the name Jesus is told to the Virgin instead of to Joseph; we hear nothing of the shepherds and the glory of the Lord round the chanting angels; Jesus is uncomely, and works making ploughs and yokes, of which we hear nothing in the Gospels; the fire at the baptism is not mentioned in the Gospels, and the voice from heaven speaks in words not found in them; he is called a magician, of which accusation we know nothing from the four; the colt of the ass is tied to a vine, a circumstance omitted in the canonical writings; it is no where said in the New Testament that the bread at the Lord's supper is given in remembrance of *the incarnation*, but, on the contrary, it is in remembrance of *the death* of Christ; the crucifixion is not stated to have taken place during the Passover, but on the contrary the Fourth Gospel places it before, the others after, the Passover; we hear nothing of Christ set on the judgment seat in the Gospels: the *vesture* is not divided according to John, who draws a distinction between the

vesture and the *raiment* which is not recognised by Justin; the taunts of the crowd are different; the denial of Christ by all the Apostles is uncanonical, as is also their forsaking him *after* the crucifixion; we do not hear of the "day of the Sun" in our Gospels, nor of the rulers of heaven and their reception of Christ. In fact, there are more points of divergence than of coincidence between the details of the story of Jesus given by Justin and that given in the Four Gospels, and yet Paley says that: "all the references in Justin are made without mentioning the author; which proves that these books were perfectly notorious, and that there were no other accounts of Christ then extant, or, at least, no others so received and credited, as to make it necessary to distinguish these from the rest" ("Evidences," p. 123). And Paley has actually the hardihood to state that what "seems extremely to be observed is, that in all Justin's works, from which might be extracted almost a complete life of Christ, there are but two instances in which he refers to anything as said or done by Christ, which is not related concerning him in our present Gospels; which shows that these Gospels, and these, we may say, alone, were the authorities from which the Christians of that day drew the information upon which they depended" (Ibid pp. 122, 123). Paley, probably, never intended that a life of Christ should "be extracted" from "all Justin's works." It is done above, and the reader may judge for himself of Paley's truthfulness. One of the "two instances" is given as follows: "The other, of a circumstance in Christ's baptism, namely, a fiery or luminous appearance upon the water, which, according to Epiphanius, is noticed in the Gospel of the Hebrews; and which might be true; but which, whether true or false, is mentioned by Justin with a plain mark of diminution when compared with what he quotes as resting upon Scripture authority. The reader will advert to this distinction. 'And then, when Jesus came to the river Jordan, where John was baptising, as Jesus descended into the water, a fire also was kindled in Jordan; and when he came up out of the water, *the apostles of this our Christ have written*, that the Holy Ghost lighted upon him as a dove'" (Ibid, p. 123). The italics here are Paley's own. Now let the reader turn to the passage itself, and he will find that Paley has deliberately altered the construction of the phrases, in order to make a "distinction" that Justin does not make, inserting the

reference to the apostles in a different place to that which it holds in Justin. Is it credible that such duplicity passes to-day for argument? one can only hope that the large majority of Christians who quote Paley are ignorant, and are, therefore, unconscious of the untruthfulness of the apologist; the passage quoted is taken from the "Dialogue with Trypho," chap. 88, and runs as follows: "Then, when Jesus had gone to the river Jordan, where John was baptising, and when he had stepped into the water, a fire was kindled in the Jordan; and when he came out of the water, the Holy Ghost lighted on him like a dove; the apostles of this very Christ of ours wrote" [thus]. The phrase italicised by Paley concludes the account, and if it refers to one part of the story, it refers to all; thus the reader can see for himself that Justin makes no "mark of diminution" of any kind, but gives the whole story, fire, Holy Ghost, and all, as from the "Memoirs." The mockery of Christ on the cross is worded differently in Justin and in the Gospels, and he distinctly says that he quotes from the "Memoirs." "They spoke in mockery the words which are recorded in the memoirs of his Apostles: 'He said he was the Son of God; let him come down: let God save him'" ("Dial." chap. ci.).

If we turn to the Clementines, we find, in the same way, passages not to be found in the Canonical Gospels. "And Peter said: We remember that our Lord and Teacher, as commanding us, said: Keep the mysteries for me, and the sons of my house" ("Hom." xix. chap. 20). "And Peter said: If, therefore, of the Scriptures some are true and some are false, our Teacher rightly said: 'Be ye good money-changers,' as in the Scriptures there are some true sayings and some spurious" ("Hom." ii. chap. 51; see also iii. chap. 50, and xviii. chap. 20). This saying of Christ is found in many of the Fathers. "To those who think that God tempts, as the Scriptures say, he [Jesus] said: 'The tempter is the wicked one, who also tempted himself'" ("Hom." iii. chap. 55).

Of the Clementine "Homilies" Mr. Sanday remarks, "several apocryphal sayings, and some apocryphal details, are added. Thus the Clementine writer calls John a 'Hemerobaptist,' *i.e.*, member of a sect which practised daily baptism. He talks about a rumour which became current in the reign of Tiberius, about the 'vernal equinox,' that at the same time a King should arise in Judæa who

should work miracles, making the blind to see, the lame to walk, healing every disease, including leprosy, and raising the dead; in the incident of the Canaanite woman (whom, with Mark, he calls a Syrophœnician) he adds her name, 'Justa,' and that of her daughter 'Bernice.' He also limits the ministry of our Lord to one year" ("Gospels in the Second Century," pp. 167, 168). But it is needless to multiply such passages; three or four would be enough to prove our position: whence were they drawn, if not from records differing from the Gospels now received? We, therefore, conclude that in the numerous Evangelical passages quoted by the Fathers, which are not in the Canonical Gospels, we find *evidence that the earlier records were not the Gospels now esteemed Canonical.*

1. *That the books themselves show marks of their later origin.* We should draw this conclusion from phrases scattered throughout the Gospels, which show that the writers were ignorant of local customs, habits, and laws, and therefore could not have been Jews contemporary with Jesus at the date when he is alleged to have lived. We find a clear instance of this ignorance in the mention made by Luke of the census which is supposed to have brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem immediately before the birth of Jesus. If Jesus was born at the time alleged "the Roman census in question must have been made either under Herod the Great, or at the commencement of the reign of Archelaus. This is in the highest degree improbable, for in those countries which were not reduced *in formam provinciæ*, but were governed by *regibus sociis*, the taxes were levied by these princes, who paid a tribute to the Romans; and this was the state of things in Judæa prior to the deposition of Archelaus.....The Evangelist relieves us from a further inquiry into this more or less historical or arbitrary combination by adding that this taxing was first made when Cyrenius (Quirinus) *was Governor of* Syria ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου, for it is an authenticated point that the assessment of Quirinus did not take place either under Herod or early in the reign of Archelaus, the period at which, according to Luke, Jesus was born. Quirinus was not at that time Governor of Syria, a situation held during the last years of Herod by Lentius Saturninus, and after him by Quintilius Varus; and it was not till long after the death of Herod that Quirinus was appointed Governor of Syria. That Quirinus undertook a census of Judæa we know

certainly from Josephus, who, however, remarks that he was sent to execute this measure 'when Archelaus' country was laid to the province of Syria (compare "Ant.," bk. xvii. ch. 13, sec. 5; bk. xviii. ch. 1, sec. 1; "Wars of the Jews," bk. ii. ch. 8, sec. 1; and ch. 9, sec. 1) thus, about ten years after the time at which, according to Matthew and Luke, Jesus must have been born" (Strauss's "Life of Jesus," vol. i., pp. 202—204).

The confusion of dates, as given in Luke, proves that the writer was ignorant of the internal history of Judæa and the neighbouring provinces. The birth of Jesus, according to Luke, must have taken place six months after the birth of John Baptist, and as John was born during the reign of Herod, Jesus must also have been born under the same King, or else at the commencement of the reign of Archelaus. Yet Luke says that he was born during the census in Judæa, which, as we have seen just above, took place ten years later. "The Evangelist, therefore, in order to get a census, must have conceived the condition of things such as they were after the deposition of Archelaus; but in order to get a census extending to Galilee, he must have imagined the kingdom to have continued undivided, as in the time of Herod the Great. [Strauss had explained that the reduction of the kingdom of Archelaus into a Roman province did not affect Galilee, which was still ruled by Herod Antipas as an allied prince, and that a census taken by the Roman Governor would, therefore, not extend to Galilee, and could not affect Joseph, who, living at Nazareth, would be the subject of Herod. See, as illustrative of this, Luke xxiii. 6, 7.] Thus he deals in manifest contradictions; or, rather, he has an exceedingly sorry acquaintance with the political relations of that period; for he extends the census not only to the whole of Palestine, but also (which we must not forget) to the whole Roman world" (Strauss's "Life of Jesus," vol. i., p. 206).

After quoting one of the passages of Josephus referred to above, Dr. Giles says: "There can be little doubt that this is the mission of Cyrenius which the Evangelist supposed to be the occasion of the visit of Christ's parents to Bethlehem. But such an error betrays on the part of the writer a great ignorance of the Jewish history, and of Jewish politics; for, if Christ was born in the reign of Herod the Great, no Roman census or enrolment could have taken place in the dominions of an independent King. If, however, Christ

was born in the year of the census, not only Herod the Great, but Archelaus, also, his son, was dead. Nay, by no possibility can the two events be brought together; for even after the death of Archelaus, Judæa alone became a Roman province; Galilee was still governed by Herod Antipas as an independent prince, and Christ's parents would not have been required to go out of their own country to Jerusalem, for the purpose of a census which did not comprise their own country, Galilee. Besides which, it is notorious that the Roman census was taken from house to house, at the residence of each, and not at the birth-place or family rendezvous of each tribe" ("Christian Records," pp. 120, 121). Another "striking witness to the late composition of the Gospels is furnished by expressions, denoting ideas that could not have had any being in the time of Christ and his disciples, but must have been developed afterwards, at a time when the Christian religion was established on a broader and still increasing basis" (Ibid, p. 169). Dr. Giles has collected many of these, and we take them from his pages. In John i. 15, 16, we read: "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." At that time none had received of the "fulness of Christ," and the saying in the mouth of John Baptist is an anachronism. The word "cross" is several times used symbolically by Christ, as expressing patience and self-denial; but before his own crucifixion the expression would be incomprehensible, and he would surely not select a phraseology his disciples could not understand; "Bearing the cross" is a later phrase, common among Christians. Matthew xi. 12, Jesus, speaking while John the Baptist is still living, says: "From the days of John the Baptist until now"—an expression that implies a lapse of time. The word "gospel" was not in use among Christians before the end of the second century; yet we find it in Matthew iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14, xxvi. 13; Mark i. 14, viii. 35, x. 29, xiii. 10, xiv. 9; Luke ix. 6. The unclean spirit, or rather spirits, who were sent into the swine (Mark v. 9, Luke viii. 30), answered to the question, "What is thy name?" that his name was Legion. "The Four Gospels are written in Greek, and the word 'legion' is Latin; but in Galilee and Peræa the people spoke neither Latin nor Greek, but Hebrew, or a dialect of it. The word 'legion'

would be perfectly unintelligible to the disciples of Christ, and to almost everybody in the country" (Ibid, p. 197). The account of Matthew, that Jesus rode on the ass *and* the colt, to fulfil the prophecy, "Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass" (xxi. 5, 7), shows that Matthew did not understand the Hebrew idiom, which should be rendered "sitting upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass," and related an impossible riding feat to fulfil the misunderstood prophecy. The whole trial scene shows ignorance of Roman customs: the judge running in and out between accused and people, offering to scourge him *and* let him go —a course not consistent with Roman justice; then presenting him to the people with a crown of thorns and purple robe. The Roman administration would not condescend to a procedure so unjust and so undignified. The mass of contradictions in the Gospels, noticed under *k*, show that they could not have been written by disciples possessing personal knowledge of the events narrated; while the fact that they are written in Greek, as we shall see below, under *j*, proves that they were not written by "unlearned and ignorant" Jews, and were not contemporary records, penned by the immediate followers of Jesus. From these facts we draw the conclusion *that the books themselves show marks of their later origin.*

J. *That the language in which they are written is presumptive evidence against their authenticity.* We are here dealing with the supposed history of a Jewish prophet written by Jews, and yet we find it written in Greek, a language not commonly known among the Jews, as we learn from the testimony of Josephus: "I have so completely perfected the work I proposed to myself to do, that no other person, whether he were a Jew or a foreigner, had he ever so great an inclination to it, could so accurately deliver these accounts to the Greeks as is done in these books. For those of my own nation freely acknowledge that I far exceed them in the learning belonging to the Jews. I have also taken a great deal of pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks, and understand the elements of the Greek language, although I have so long accustomed myself to speak our own tongue, that I cannot pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness; for our nation does not encourage those that learn the languages of many nations.....on which account, as there have been many who have done their endea-

vours with great patience to obtain this learning, there have yet hardly been so many as two or three that have succeeded therein, who were immediately well rewarded for their pains" ("Ant." bk. xx. ch. 11, sec. 2). He further tells us that "I grew weary, and went on slowly, it being a large subject, and a difficult thing to translate our history into a foreign and, to us, unaccustomed language" (Ibid, Preface). The chief reason, perhaps, for this general ignorance of Greek was the barbarous aversion of the Rabbis to foreign literature. "No one will be partaker of eternal life who reads foreign literature. Execrable is he, as the swineherd, execrable alike, who teaches his son the wisdom of the Greeks" (translated from Latin translation of Rabbi Akiba, as given in note in Keim's "Jesus of Nazara," vol. i. p, 295). It is noteworthy, also, that the Evangelists quote generally from the Septuagint, and that loyal Jews would have avoided doing so, since "the translation of the Bible into Greek had already been the cause of grief, and even of hatred, in Jerusalem" (Ibid, p. 294). In the face of this we are asked to believe that a Galilean fisherman, by the testimony of Acts iv. 13, unlearned and ignorant, outstripped his whole nation, save the "two or three that have succeeded" in learning Greek, and wrote a philosophical and historical treatise in that language. Also that Matthew, a publican, a member of the most degraded class of the Jews, was equally learned, and published a history in the same tongue. Yet these two marvels of erudition were unknown to Josephus, who expressly states that the two or three who had learned Greek, were "immediately well rewarded for their pains." The argument does not tell against Mark and Luke, as no one knows anything about these two writers, and they may have been Greeks, for anything we know to the contrary. If Mark, however, is to be identified with John Mark, sister's son to Barnabas, then it will lie also against him. Leaving aside the main difficulty, pointed out above, it is grossly improbable, on the face of it, that these Jewish writers should employ Greek, even if they knew it, instead of their own tongue. They were writing the story of a Jew; why should they translate all his sayings instead of writing them down as they fell from his lips? Their work lay among the Jews. Eight years after the death of Jesus they rebuked one of their number, Peter, who eat with "men uncircumcised" (Acts xi. 3); nineteen years afterwards they still went only "unto the circumcision" (Gal. ii. 9); twenty-

seven years afterwards they were still in Jerusalem, teaching Jews, and carefully fulfilling the law (Acts xxi. 18—24); after this, we hear no more of them, and they must all have been old men, not likely to then change the Jewish habits of their lives. Besides, why should they do so? their whole sphere of work was entirely Jewish, and, if they were educated enough to write at all, they would surely write for the benefit of those amongst whom they worked. The only parallel for so curious a phenomenon as these Greek Gospels, written by ignorant Jews, would be found if a Cornish fisherman and a low London attorney, both perfectly ignorant of German, wrote in German the sayings and doings of a Middlesex carpenter, and as their work was entirely confined to the lower classes of the people, who knew nothing of German, and they desired to place within their reach full knowledge of the carpenter's life, they circulated it among them in German only, and never wrote anything about him in English. The Greek text of the Gospels proves that they were written in later times, when Christianity found its adherents among the Gentile populations. It might, indeed, be fairly urged that the Greek text is a suggestion that the creed did not originate in Judæa at all, but was the offshoot of Gentile thought rather than of Jewish. However that may be, the Greek text forbids us to believe that these Gospels were written by the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus, and we conclude *that the language in which they are written is presumptive evidence against their authenticity.*

K. *That they are in themselves utterly unworthy of credit from* (1) *the miracles with which they abound.* (2) *The numerous contradictions of each by the others.* (3) *The fact that the story of the hero, the doctrines, the miracles, were current long before the supposed dates of the Gospels, so that these Gospels are simply a patchwork composed of older materials.*

(1) *The miracles with which they abound.* Paley asks: "Why should we question the genuineness of these books? Is it for that they contain accounts of supernatural events? I apprehend that this, at the bottom, is the real, though secret cause of our hesitation about them; for, had the writings, inscribed with the names of Matthew and John, related nothing but ordinary history, there would have been no more doubt whether these writings were theirs, than there is concerning the acknowledged works of Josephus

or Philo; that is, there would have been no doubt at all" ("Evidences," pp. 105, 106). There is a certain amount of truth in this argument. We *do*—openly, however, and not secretly—doubt any and every book which is said to be a record of miracles, written by an eye-witness of them; the more important the contents of a book, the more keenly are its credentials scrutinised; the more extraordinary the story it contains, the more carefully are its evidences sifted. In dealing with Josephus, we examine his authenticity before relying at all on his history; finding there is little doubt that the book was written by him, we value it as the account of an apparently careful writer. When we come to passages like one in "Wars of the Jews," bk. vi. ch. 5, sec. 3—which tells us among the portents which forewarned the Jews of the fall of the temple: "A heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple"—we do *not* believe it, any more than we believe that the devils went into the swine. If such fables, instead of forming excrescences here and there on the history of Josephus, which may be cut off without injury to the main record, were so interwoven with the history as to be part and parcel of it, so that no history would remain if they were all taken away, then we should reject Josephus as a teller of fables, and not a writer of history. If it were urged that Josephus was an eye-witness, and recorded what he saw, then we should answer: Either your history is not written by Josephus at all, but is falsely assigned to him in order to give it the credit of being written by a contemporary and an eye-witness; or else your Josephus is a charlatan, who pretended to have seen miracles in order to increase his prestige. If this supposed history of Josephus were widely spread and exercised much influence over mankind, then its authenticity would be very carefully examined and every weak point in the evidences for it tested, just as the Gospels are to-day. We may add, that it is absurd to parallel the Evangelists and Josephus, as though we knew of the one no more than we do of the others. Josephus relates his own life, giving us an account of his family, his childhood, and his education; he then tells us of his travels, of all he did, and of the books he wrote, and the books themselves bear his own announcement of his authorship; for instance, we read: "I, Joseph, the son of Matthias, by birth an Hebrew, a priest also, and one who at first fought against the Romans myself, and was forced to be present at

what was done afterwards, am the author of this work" ("Wars of the Jews," Preface, sec. 1). To which of the Gospels is such an announcement prefixed? even in Luke, where the historian writes a preface, it is not said: "I, Luke," and anonymous writings must be of doubtful authenticity. Which of the Evangelists has related for us his own life, so that we may judge of his opportunities of knowing what he tells? To which of their histories is such external testimony given as that of Tacitus to Josephus, in spite of the contempt felt by the polished Roman towards the whole Jewish race? Nothing can be more misleading than to speak of Josephus and of the Evangelists as though their writings stood on the same level; every mark of authenticity is present in the one; every mark of authenticity is absent in the other.

We shall argue as against the miraculous accounts of the Gospels—first, that the evidence is insufficient and far below the amount of evidence brought in support of more modern miracles; secondly, that the power to work miracles has been claimed by the Church all through her history, and is still so claimed, and it is, therefore, impossible to mark any period wherein miracles ceased; and, thirdly, that not only are Christian miracles unproven, but that all miracles are impossible, as well as useless if possible.

Paley, arguing for the truth of Christian miracles, *and of these only*, endeavours to lay down canons which shall exclude all others. Thus, he excludes: "I. Such accounts of supernatural events as are found only in histories by some ages posterior to the transaction.....II. Accounts published in one country of what passed in a distant country, without any proof that such accounts were known or received at home.....III. *Transient* rumours.....IV. *Naked* history (fragments, unconnected with subsequent events dependent on the miracles).....V. In a certain way, and to a certain degree, *particularity*, in names, dates, places, circumstances, and in the order of events preceding or following.....VI. Stories on which nothing depends, in which no interest is involved, nothing is to be done or changed in consequence of believing them.....VII. Accounts which come merely *in affirmance* of opinions already formed. .....It is not necessary to admit as a miracle, what can be resolved into a *false perception* (such miracles as healing the blind, lame, etc., cannot be reduced under this head), ...or *imposture*.....or *tentative* miracles (where, out

of many attempts, one succeeds).....or *doubtful* (possibly explainable as coincidence, or effect of imagination)..... or exaggeration" ("Evidences," pp. 199—218). Paley then criticises some miracles alleged by Hume, and argues against them. He very fairly criticises and disposes of them, but fails to see that the same style of argument would dispose of his Gospel ones. The Cardinal de Retz sees, at a church in Saragossa, a man who lighted the lamps, and the canons told him "that he had been several years at the gate with one leg only. I saw him with two." Paley urges that "it nowhere appears that he (the Cardinal) either examined the limb, or asked the patient, or indeed any one, a single question about the matter" ("Evidences," page 224). Well argued, Dr. Paley; and in the man who sat outside the beautiful gate of the Temple, who examined the limb, or questioned the patient? Canons I. and II. exclude the Gospel miracles, unless the Gospels are proved to be written by those whose names they bear, and even then there is no proof that either Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, published their Gospels in Judæa, or that their accounts were "received at home." The doubt and obscurity hanging over the origin of the Gospels themselves, throws the like doubt and obscurity on all that they relate. "Transient rumours," "false perception," "imposture," "doubtful," and "exaggeration"—there is a door open to all these things in the slow and gradual putting together of the collection of legends now known as "the Gospels." We argue that the witness of the Gospels to the miracles cannot be accepted until the Gospels themselves are authenticated, and that the evidence in support of the miracles is, therefore, insufficient. Strauss shows us very clearly how the miracles recorded in the Gospels became ascribed to Jesus. "That the Jewish people in the time of Jesus expected miracles from the Messiah is in itself natural, since the Messiah was a second Moses, and the greatest of the prophets, and to Moses and the prophets the national legend attributed miracles of all kinds.....But not only was it pre-determined in the popular expectation that the Messiah should work miracles in general—the particular kinds of miracles which he was to perform were fixed, also in accordance with Old Testament types and declarations. Moses dispensed meat and drink to the people in a supernatural manner (Ex. xvi. xvii.): the same was expected, as the rabbins explicitly say, from the Messiah. At the prayer

of Elisha, eyes were in one case closed, in another, opened supernaturally (2 Kings vi.): the Messiah also was to open the eyes of the blind. By this prophet and his master, even the dead had been raised (1 Kings xvii; 2 Kings iv.); hence to the Messiah also power over death could not be wanting. Among the prophecies, Is. xxxv, 5, 6 (comp. xlii. 7), was especially influential in forming this part of the Messianic idea. It is here said of the Messianic times: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing" ("Life of Jesus," vol. ii., pp. 235, 236.) In dealing with the alleged healing of the blind, Strauss remarks: "How should we represent to ourselves the sudden restoration of vision to a blind eye by a word or a touch? as purely miraculous and magical? That would be to give up thinking on the subject. As magnetic? There is no precedent of magnetism having influence over a disease of this nature. Or, lastly, as psychical? But blindness is something so independent of the mental life, so entirely corporeal, that the idea of its removal at all, still less of its sudden removal by means of a mental operation, is not to be entertained. We must, therefore, acknowledge that an historical conception of these narratives is more than merely difficult to us; and we proceed to inquire whether we cannot show it to be probable that legends of this kind should arise unhistorically.....That these deeds of Elisha were conceived, doubtless with reference to the passage of Isaiah, as a real opening of the eyes of the blind, is proved by the above rabbinical passage [stating that the Messiah would do all that in ancient times had been done by the hands of the righteous, vol. i., p. 81, note], and hence cures of the blind were expected from the Messiah. Now, if the Christian community, proceeding as it did from the bosom of Judaism, held Jesus to be the Messianic personage, it must manifest the tendency to ascribe to him every Messianic predicate, and, therefore, the one in question" (Ibid, 292, 293).

Not only, then, are the miracles rendered doubtful by the dubious character of the records in which they are found, but there is a clear and reasonable explanation why we should expect to find them in any history of a supposed Messiah. Christian apologists appear to have overlooked the statement in the Gospels that Jesus objected to publicity being given to his supposed miracles; the natural

conclusion that sceptics draw from this assertion, is that the miracles never took place at all, and that the supposed modesty of Jesus is invented in order to account for the ignorance of the people concerning the alleged marvels. Judge Strange fairly remarks: "The appeal to miracles is a very questionable resort. Now, as Jesus is repeatedly represented to have exhorted those on whose behalf they were wrought to keep the matter secret to themselves, and as when such signs, upon being asked for, were refused to be accorded by him, and the desire to have them was repressed as sinful, it is to be gathered, in spite of the sayings to the contrary, that the writers were aware that there was no such public sense of the occurrence of these marvels as must have attached to them had they really been enacted, and we are left to the conclusion that there were in fact no such demonstrations" ("The Portraiture and Mission of Jesus," p. 23). Clearly, miracles are useless, as evidence, unless they are publicly performed, and the secresy used by Jesus suggests fraud rather than miraculous power, and savours of the conjuror rather than of the "God." But, further, there is far stronger evidence for later Church miracles than for those of Christ, or of the apostles, and if evidence in support of miracles is good for anything, these more modern miracles must command our belief. Eusebius relates the following miracle of Narcissus, the thirtieth Bishop of Jerusalem, A.D. 180, as one among many: "Whilst the deacons were keeping the vigils the oil failed them; upon which all the people being very much dejected, Narcissus commanded the men that managed the lights to draw water from a neighbouring well, and to bring it to him. They having done it as soon as said, Narcissus prayed over the water, and then commanded them, in a firm faith in Christ, to pour it into the lamps. When they had also done this, contrary to all natural expectation, by an extraordinary and divine influence, the nature of the water was changed into the quality of oil, and by most of the brethren a small quantity was preserved from that time until our own, as a specimen of the wonder then performed" ("Eccles. Hist.," bk. vi., chap. 9). St. Augustine bears personal witness to more than one miracle which happened in his own presence, and gives a long list of cures performed in his time. "One thing may be affirmed, that nothing of importance is omitted, and in regard to essential details they are as explicit as the mass of other cases

reported. In every instance names and addresses are stated, and it will have been observed that all these miracles occurred in, or near to, Hippo, and in his own diocese. It is very certain that in every case the fact of the miracle is asserted in the most direct and positive terms" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., pp. 167, 168).

None can deny that miraculous powers have been claimed by Christian Churches from the time of Christ down to the present day, and that there is no break which can be pointed to as the date at which these powers ceased. "From the first of the Fathers to the last of the Popes a succession of bishops, of saints, and of martyrs, and of miracles, is continued without interruption; and the progress of superstition was so gradual, and almost imperceptible, that we know not in what particular link we should break the chain of tradition. Every age bears testimony to the wonderful events by which it was distinguished; and its testimony appears no less weighty and respectable than that of the preceding generation, till we are insensibly led on to accuse our own inconsistency, if in the eighth or in the twelfth century we deny to the venerable Bede, or to the holy Bernard, the same degree of confidence which, in the second century, we had so liberally granted to Justin or to Irenæus. If the truth of any of those miracles is appreciated by their apparent use and propriety, every age had unbelievers to convince, heretics to confute, and idolatrous nations to convert; and sufficient motives might always be produced to justify the interposition of heaven. And yet, since every friend to revelation is persuaded of the reality, and every reasonable man is convinced of the cessation, of miraculous powers, it is evident that there must have been *some period* in which they were either suddenly or gradually withdrawn from the Christian Church. Whatever era is chosen for that purpose, the death of the Apostles, the conversion of the Roman empire, or the extinction of the Arian heresy, the insensibility of the Christians who lived at that time will equally afford a just matter of surprise. They still supported their pretensions after they had lost their power. Credulity performed the office of faith; fanaticism was permitted to assume the language of inspiration; and the effects of accident or contrivance were ascribed to supernatural causes. The recent experience of genuine miracles should have instructed the Christian world in the ways of Providence, and habituated

their eye (if we may use a very inadequate expression) to the style of the Divine Artist" (Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," vol. ii., chap. xv., p. 145). The miraculous powers were said to have been given by Christ himself to his disciples. "These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and, if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark xvi. 17, 18). This power is exercised by the Apostles (see Acts throughout), by believers in the Churches (1 Cor. xii. 9, 10; Gal. iii. 5; James v. 14, 15); at any rate, it was in force in the time with which these books treat, according to the Christians. Justus, surnamed Barsabas, drinks poison, and is unhurt (Eusebius, bk. iii., chap. xxxix.). Polycarp's martyrdom, supposed to be in the next generation, is accompanied by miracle (Epistle of Church of Smyrna; Apostolical Fathers, p. 92; see ante, pp. 220, 221). At Hierapolis the daughters of Philip the Apostle tell Papias how one was there raised from the dead (Eusebius, bk. iii., ch. xxxix.). Justin Martyr pleads the miracles worked in his own time in Rome itself (second "Apol.," ch. vi.). Irenæus urges that the heretics cannot work miracles as can the Catholics: "they can neither confer sight on the blind, nor hearing on the deaf, nor chase away all sorts of demons.....nor can they cure the weak, or the lame, or the paralytic" ("Against Heretics," bk. ii., ch. xxxi., sec. 2). Tertullian encourages Christians to give up worldly pleasures by reminding them of their grander powers: "what nobler than to tread under foot the gods of the nations, to exorcise evil spirits, to perform cures?" ("De Spectaculis," sec. 29). "Origen claims for Christians the power still to expel demons, and to heal diseases, in the name of Jesus; and he states that he had seen many persons so cured of madness, and countless other evils" (quoted from "Origen against Celsus" in "Sup. Rel.," vol. i., p. 154. A mass of evidence on this subject will be found in chap. v. of this work, on "The Permanent Stream of Miraculous Pretension"). St. Augustine's testimony has been already referred to. St. Ambrose discovered the bones of SS. Gervasius and Protasius; and "these relics were laid in the Faustinian Basilic, and the next morning were translated into the Ambrosian Basilic; during which translation a blind man, named Severus, a butcher by trade, was cured by touching the bier on which

the relics lay with a handkerchief, and then applying it to his eyes. He had been blind several years, was known to the whole city, and the miracle was performed before a prodigious number of people; and is testified also by St. Austin [Augustine], who was then at Milan, in three several parts of his works, and by Paulinus in the Life of St. Ambrose" ("Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, etc.," by Rev. Alban Butler, vol. xii., pp. 1001, 1002; ed. 1838; published in two vols., each containing six vols.). The sacred stigmata of St. Francis d'Assisi (died 1226) were seen and touched by St. Bonaventure, Pope Alexander IV., Pope Gregory IX., fifty friars, many nuns, and innumerable crowds (Ibid, vol. x., pp. 582, 583). This same saint underwent the operation of searing, and, "when the surgeon was about to apply the searing-iron, the saint spoke to the fire, saying: 'Brother fire, I beseech thee to burn me gently, that I may be able to endure thee.' He was seared very deep, from the ear to the eyebrow, but seemed to feel no pain at all" (Ibid, p. 575). The miracles of St. Francis Xavier (died 1552) are borne witness to on all sides, and resulted in the conversion of crowds of Indians; even so late as 1744, when the Archbishop of Goa, by order of John V. of Portugal, attended by the Viceroy, the Marquis of Castel Nuovo, visited the saint's relics, "the body was found without the least bad smell," and had "not suffered the least alteration, or symptom of corruption" (Ibid, vol. xii., p. 974). The chain of miracles extends right down to the present day. At Lourdes, in this year (1876), the Virgin was crowned by the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris in the presence of thirty-five prelates and one hundred thousand people. During the mass performed at the Grotto by the Nuncio, Madeleine Lancereau, of Poictiers, aged 61, known by a large number of the pilgrims as having been unable to walk without crutches for nineteen years, was radically cured. Here is a better authenticated miracle than any one in the Gospel story; yet no Protestant even cares to investigate the matter, or believes its truth to be within the limits of possibility. Thus we see that not a century has passed since A.D. 30 which has not been thickly sown with miracles, and there is no reason why we should believe in the miracles of the first century, and reject those of the following eighteen; nor is the first century even "the beginning of miracles," for before that date Jewish and Pagan miracles are to be found in abundance. Why should

Bible miracles be severed from their relations all over the world, so that belief in them is commendable faith, while belief in the rest is reprehensible credulity? "The fact is, however, that the Gospel miracles were preceded and accompanied by others of the same type; and we may here merely mention exorcism of demons, and the miraculous cure of disease, as popular instances; they were also followed by a long succession of others, quite as well authenticated, whose occurrence only became less frequent in proportion as the diffusion of knowledge dispelled popular credulity. Even at the present day a stray miracle is from time to time reported in outlying districts, where the ignorance and superstition which formerly produced so abundant a growth of them are not yet entirely dispelled" ("Sup. Rel.," vol. i., p. 148). "Ignorance, and its invariable attendant, superstition, have done more than mere love of the marvellous to produce and perpetuate belief in miracles, and there cannot be any doubt that the removal of ignorance always leads to the cessation of miracles" (Ibid, p. 144).

Special objection has often been raised against one class of miracles—common to the Gospels and to all miraculous narratives—which has severely taxed the faith even of the Christians themselves—that class, namely, which consists of the healing of those "possessed with devils." Exorcism has always been a favourite kind of miracle, but, in these days, very few believe in the possibility of possession, and the language of the Evangelists on the subject has consequently given rise to much trouble of mind. Prebendary Row, in a work on "The Supernatural in the New Testament Possible, Credible, and Historical"—one of the volumes issued by the Christian Evidence Society in answer to "Supernatural Religion"—deals fully with this difficulty; it has been urged that possession was simply a form of mania, and on this Mr. Row says: "Now, on the assumption that possession was simple mania, and nothing more, the following suppositions are the only possible ones. First, that our Lord really distinguished between mania and possession; but that the Evangelists have inaccurately reported his words and actions, through the media of their own subjective impressions, or, in short, have attributed to him language that he did not really utter. Second, that our Lord knew that possession was a form of mania, and adopted the current notions of the time in speaking of it,

and that the words were really uttered by him. Third, that with similar knowledge, he adopted the language as part of the curative process. Fourth, that he accepted the validity of the distinction, and that it was a real one during those times" ("Supernatural in the New Testament," pp. 251, 252). Mr. Row argues that: "If possession be mania, there is nothing in the language which the Evangelists have attributed to our Lord which compromises the truthfulness of his character. If, on the other hand, we assume that possession was an objective fact, there is nothing in our existing scientific knowledge of the human mind which proves that the possessions of the New Testament were impossible" (Ibid). Mr. Row rejects the first alternative, and accepts the accuracy of the Evangelic records. But he considers that if possession were simply mania, Jesus, knowing the nature of the disease, might reasonably use language suited to the delusion, as most likely to effect a cure; he could not argue with a maniac that he was under a delusion, but would rightly use whatever method was best fitted to ensure recovery. If this idea be rejected, and the reality of demoniacal possession maintained as most consonant with the behaviour of Jesus, then Mr. Row argues that there is no reason to consider it impossible that either good or evil spirits should be able to influence man, and that psychological science does not warrant us in a denial of the possibility of such influence.

The utter uselessness of miracles—supposing them to be possible—is worthy of remembrance. They must not be accepted as proofs of a divine mission, for false prophets can work them as well as true (Deut. xiii., 1—5; Matt. xxiv., 24; 2 Thess. ii., 9; Rev. xiii., 13—15, etc.) and it may be that God himself works them to deceive (Deut. xiii., 3). Satan can work miracles to authenticate the false doctrines of his emissiaries, and there is no test whereby to distinguish the miracle worked by God from the miracle worked by Satan. Hence a miracle is utterly useless, for the credibility of a teacher rests on the morality that he teaches, and if this is good, it is accepted without a miracle to attest its goodness, so that the attesting miracle is superfluous. If it is bad, it is rejected in spite of a miracle to attest its authority, so that the attesting miracle is deceptive. The only use of a miracle might be to attest a revelation of otherwise unknowable facts, which had nothing to do with any moral teaching; and seeing that

such revelation could not be investigated, as it dealt with the unknowable, it would be highly dangerous—and, perhaps, blasphemous—to accept it on the faith of the miracle, for it might quite as likely be a revelation made by Satan to injure, as by God to benefit, mankind. Allowing that God and Satan exist, it would seem likely—judging Christianity by its fruits—that the Christian religion is such a malevolent revelation of the evil one.

The objection we raise is, however, of far wider scope than the assertion of the lack of evidence for the New Testament miracles; it is against all, and not only against Christian, miracles. "As far as the impossibility of supernatural occurrences is concerned, Pantheism and Atheism occupy precisely the same grounds. If either of them propounds a true theory of the universe, any supernatural occurrence, which necessarily implies a supernatural agent to bring it about, is impossible, and the entire controversy as to whether miracles have ever been actually performed is a foregone conclusion. Modern Atheism, while it does not venture in categorical terms to affirm that no God exists, definitely asserts that there is no evidence that there is one. It follows that, if there is no evidence that there is a God, there can be no evidence that a miracle ever has been performed, for the very idea of a miracle implies the idea of a God to work one. If, therefore, Atheism is true, all controversy about miracles is useless. They are simply impossible, and to inquire whether an impossible event has happened is absurd. To such a person the historical inquiry, as far as a miracle is concerned, must be a foregone conclusion. It might have a little interest as a matter of curiosity; but even if the most unequivocal evidence could be adduced that an occurrence such as we call supernatural had taken place, the utmost that it could prove would be that some most extraordinary and abnormal fact had taken place in nature of which we did not know the cause. But to prove a miracle to any person who consistently denies that he has any evidence that any being exists which is not a portion of and included in the material universe, or developed out of it, is impossible" ("The Supernatural in the New Testament," by Prebendary Row, pp. 14, 15). We maintain that Nature includes *everything*, and that, therefore, the *supernatural* is an impossibility. Every new fact, however marvellous, must, therefore, be within Nature; and while our ignorance may for awhile prevent us from knowing in what

category the newly-observed phenomenon should be classed, it is none the less certain that wider knowledge will allot to it its own place, and that more careful observation will reduce it under law, *i.e.*, within the observed sequence or concurrence of phenomena. The natural, to the unthinking, coincides with their own knowledge, and supernatural, to them, simply means super-known; therefore, in ignorant ages, miracles are every-day occurrences, and as knowledge widens the miraculous diminishes. The books of unscientific ages—that is, all early literature—are full of miraculous events, and it may be taken as an axiom of criticism that the miraculous is unhistorical.

(2). *The numerous contradictions of each by the others.*—We shall here only present a few of the most glaring contradictions in the Gospels, leaving untouched a mass of minor discrepancies. We find the principal of these when we compare the three synoptics with the Fourth Gospel, but there are some irreconcilable differences even between the three. The contradictory genealogies of Christ given in Matthew and Luke—farther complicated, in part, by a third discordant genealogy in Chronicles—have long been the despair of Christian harmonists. "On comparing these lists, we find that between David and Christ there are only two names which occur in both Matthew and Luke—those of Zorobabel and of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus. In tracing the list downwards from David there would be less difficulty in explaining this, at least, to a certain point, for Matthew follows the line of Solomon, and Luke that of Nathan—both of whom were sons of David. But even in the downward line, on reaching Salathiel, where the two genealogies again come into contact, we find, to our astonishment, that in Luke he is the son of Neri, whilst in Matthew his father's name is Jechonias. From Zorobabel downwards, the lists are again divergent, until we reach Joseph, who in St. Luke is placed as the son of Heli, whilst in St. Matthew his father's name is Jacob ("Christian Records," Dr. Giles, p. 101). According to Chronicles, Jotham is the great-great-grandson of Ahaziah; according to Matthew, he is his son (admitting that the Ahaziah of Chronicles is the Ozias of Matthew); according to Chronicles, Jechonias is the grandson of Josiah, according to Matthew, he is his son; according to Chronicles, Zorababel is the son of Pedaiah, according to Matthew, he is the son of Salathiel, according to Luke, he is the son of

Neri; according to Chronicles, Zorobabel left eight children, but neither Matthew's Abiud, nor Luke's Rhesa, are among them. The same discordance is found when Matthew and Luke again touch each other in Joseph, the husband of Mary; according to the one, Jacob begat Joseph, according to the other, Joseph was the son of Heli. To crown the absurdity of the whole, we are given two genealogies of Joseph, who is no relation to Jesus at all, if the story of the virgin-birth be true, while none is given of Mary, through whom alone Jesus is said to have derived his humanity. We have, therefore, no genealogy at all of Jesus in the Gospels. Various theories have been put forward to reconcile the irreconcilable; some say that the genealogy in Luke is that of Mary, of which supposition it is enough to remark that "Mary, the daughter of," can scarcely be indicated by "Joseph, the son of." It is also said that Joseph was legally the son of Jacob, although naturally the son of Heli, it being supposed that Jacob died childless, and that his brother Heli according to the Levitical law, married the widow of Jacob; but here Joseph's grand-fathers and great-grand-fathers should be the same, Heli and Jacob being supposed to be brothers. Besides, if Joseph were legally the son of Jacob, only the genealogy of Jacob should be given, since that only would be Joseph's genealogy. No man can reckon his paternal ancestry through two differing lines. To make matters in yet more hopeless confusion, we find Chronicles giving twenty-two generations where Matthew gives seventeen, and Luke twenty-three; while, from David to Christ, Matthew reckons twenty-eight and Luke forty-three, a most marvellous discrepancy.

"If we compare the genealogies of Matthew and Luke together, we become aware of still more striking discrepancies. Some of these differences indeed are unimportant, as the opposite direction of the two tables.....More important is the considerable difference in the number of generations for equal periods, Luke having forty-one between David and Jesus, whilst Matthew has only twenty-six. The main difficulty, however, lies in this: that in some parts of the genealogy in Luke totally different persons are made the ancestors of Jesus from those in Matthew. It is true, both writers agree in deriving the lineage of Jesus through Joseph from David and Abraham, and that the names of the individual members of the series correspond from Abraham to David, as well as two of the names in the sub-

sequent portion : those of Salathiel and Zorobabel. But the difficulty becomes desperate when we find that, with these two exceptions about midway, the whole of the names from David to the foster father of Jesus are totally different in Matthew and in Luke. In Matthew the father of Joseph is called Jacob; in Luke, Heli. In Matthew the son of David through whom Joseph descended from that King is Solomon ; in Luke, Nathan ; and so on, the line descends, in Matthew, through the race of known Kings ; in Luke, through an unknown collateral branch, coinciding only with respect to Salathiel and Zorobabel, whilst they still differ in the names of the father of Salathiel and the son of Zorobabel.....A consideration of the insurmountable difficulties, which unavoidably embarrass every attempt to bring these two genealogies into harmony with one another, will lead us to despair of reconciling them, and will incline us to acknowledge, with the more free-thinking class of critics, that they are mutually contradictory. Consequently, they cannot both be true.....In fact, then, neither table has any advantage over the other. If the one is unhistorical, so also is the other, since it is very improbable that the genealogy of an obscure family like that of Joseph, extending through so long a series of generations, should have been preserved during all the confusion of the exile, and the disturbed period that followed.....According to the prophecies, the Messiah could only spring from David. When, therefore, a Galilean, whose lineage was utterly unknown, and of whom consequently no one could prove that he was not descended from David, had acquired the reputation of being the Messiah ; what more natural than that tradition should, under different forms, have early ascribed to him a Davidical descent, and that genealogical tables, corresponding with this tradition, should have been formed ? which, however, as they were constructed upon no certain data, would necessarily exhibit such differences and contradictions as we find actually existing between the genealogies in Matthew and in Luke" ("Life of Jesus," by Strauss, vol. i., pp. 130, 131, and 137—139).

The accounts of the several angelic warnings to Mary and to Joseph appear to be mutually exclusive. Most theologians, says Strauss, "maintaining, and justly, that the silence of one Evangelist concerning an event which is narrated by the other, is not a negation of the event, they blend the two accounts together in the following manner :

1, the angel makes known to Mary her approaching pregnancy (Luke); 2, she then journeys to Elizabeth (the same Gospel); 3, after her return, her situation being discovered, Joseph takes offence (Matthew); whereupon, 4, he likewise is visited by an angelic apparition (the same Gospel). But this arrangement of the incidents is, as Schliermacher has already remarked, full of difficulty; and it seems that what is related by one Evangelist is not only pre-supposed, but excluded, by the other. For, in the first place, the conduct of the angel who appears to Joseph is not easily explained, if the same, or another, angel had previously appeared to Mary. The angel (in Matthew) speaks altogether as if his communication were the first in this affair. He neither refers to the message previously received by Mary, nor reproaches Joseph because he had not believed it; but, more than all, the informing Joseph of the name of the expected child, and the giving him a full detail of the reasons why he should be so called (Mat. i. 21), would have been wholly superfluous had the angel (according to Luke i. 31) already indicated this name to Mary. Still more incomprehensible is the conduct of the betrothed parties, according to this arrangement of events. Had Mary been visited by an angel, who had made known to her an approaching supernatural pregnancy, would not the first impulse of a delicate woman have been to hasten to impart to her betrothed the import of the divine message, and by this means to anticipate the humiliating discovery of her situation, and an injurious suspicion on the part of her affianced husband? But exactly this discovery Mary allows Joseph to make from others, and thus excites suspicion; for it it evident that the expression εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρι ἔχουσα (Mat. i. 18) signifies a discovery made independent of any communication on Mary's part, and it is equally clear that in this manner only does Joseph obtain the knowledge of her situation, since his conduct is represented as the result of that discovery (ευρίσκεσθαι); ("Life of Jesus," v. i., pp. 146, 147).

Strauss gives a curious list, showing the gradual growth of the myth relating to the birth of Jesus (we may remark No. 3 is distinctly out of place when referred to Olshausen: it should be referred to the early Fathers, from whom Olshausen derived it):—

"1. Contemporaries of Jesus and composers of the genealogies: Joseph and Mary man and wife—Jesus the offspring of their marriage.

"2. The age and authors of our histories of the birth of Jesus: Mary and Joseph betrothed only; Joseph having no participation in the conception of the child, and, previous to his birth, no conjugal connection with Mary.

"3. Olshausen and others: subsequent to the birth of Jesus, Joseph, though then the husband of Mary, relinquishes his matrimonial rights.

"4. Epiphanius, Protevangelium, Jacobi, and others: Joseph a decrepit old man, no longer to be thought of as a husband; the children attributed to him are of a former marriage. More especially it is not as a bride and wife that he receives Mary; he takes her merely under his guardianship.

"5. Protevang., Chrysostom, and others: Mary's virginity was not only not destroyed by any subsequent births of children by Joseph, it was not in the slightest degree impaired by the birth of Jesus.

"6. Jerome: Not Mary only, but Joseph also, observed an absolute virginity, and the pretended brothers of Jesus were not his sons, but merely cousins to Jesus" ("Life of Jesus," vol. i., p. 188).

Thus we see how a myth gradually forms itself, bit after bit being added to it, until the story is complete.

The account given by Luke of the meeting of Elizabeth and Mary is clearly mythical, and not historical: "Apart from the intention of the narrator, can it be thought natural that two friends visiting one another should, even in the midst of the most extraordinary occurrences, break forth into long hymns, and that their conversation should entirely lose the character of dialogue, the natural form on such occasions? By a supernatural influence alone could the minds of the two friends be attuned to a state of elevation, so foreign to their every-day life. But if indeed Mary's hymn is to be understood as the work of the Holy Spirit, it is surprising that a speech emanating immediately from the divine source of inspiration should not be more striking for its originality, but should be so interlarded with reminiscences from the Old Testament, borrowed from the song of praise spoken by the mother of Samuel (1 Sam. ii) under analogous circumstances. Accordingly, we must admit that the compilation of this hymn, consisting of recollections from the Old Testament, was put together in a natural way; but allowing its composition to have been perfectly natural, it cannot be ascribed to the artless Mary, but to

him who poetically wrought out the tradition in circulation respecting the scene in question" ("Life of Jesus," by Strauss, vol. i., pp. 196, 197).

The notes of time given for the birth of Christ are irreconcilable. According to Matthew he is born in the reign of Herod the King: according to Luke, he is born six months after John Baptist, whose birth is referred to the reign of the same monarch; yet in Luke, he is also born at the time of the census, which must have taken place at least ten years later; thus Luke contradicts Matthew, and also contradicts himself. The discrepancies surrounding the birth are not yet complete; passing the curious differences between Matthew and Luke, Matthew knowing nothing about the visit of the shepherds, and Luke nothing of the visit of the Magi, and the consequent slaughter of the babes, we come to a direct conflict between the Evangelists; Matthew informs us that Joseph, Mary, and the child, fled into Egypt from Bethlehem to avoid the wrath of King Herod, and that they were returning to Judæa, when Joseph, hearing that Archelaus was ruling there, turned aside to Galilee, and came and dwelt "in a city called Nazareth." Luke, on the contrary, says that when the days of Mary's purification were accomplished they took the child up to Jerusalem, and presented him in the Temple, and then, after this, returned to Galilee, to "their own city, Nazareth." Moreover, had Herod wanted to find him, he could have taken him at the Temple, where his presentation caused much commotion. In Matthew, the turning into Galilee is clearly a new thing; in Luke, it is returning home; and in Luke there is no space of time wherein the flight into Egypt can by any possibility be inserted. We may add a wonder why Galilee was a safer residence than Judæa, since Antipas, its ruler, was a son of Herod, and would, *primâ facie*, be as dangerous as his brother Archelaus.

The conduct of Herod is incredible if we accept Matthew's account: "Herod's first anxious question to the magi is to ascertain the time of the appearance of the star. He "inquires diligently" (ii. 7); and he must have had a motive for so doing. What was this motive? Could he have any other purpose than that of determining the age under which no infants in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem should be allowed to live? But, according to the narrative, Herod never conceived the idea of slaughtering the children till he found that he had been "mocked of the

wise men;" and the mythical nature of the story is betrayed by this anticipation of motives which, at the time spoken of, could have no existence. Yet, further, Herod, who, though in a high degree cruel, unjust, and unscrupulous, is represented as a man of no slight sagacity, clearness of purpose, and strength of will, and who feels a deadly jealousy of an infant whom he *knows* to have been recently born in Bethlehem, a place only a few miles distant from Jerusalem, is here described not as sending his own emissaries privately to put him to death, or despatching them with the Magi, or detaining the Magi at Jerusalem, until he had ascertained the truth of their tale, and the correctness of the answer of the priests and scribes, but as simply suffering the Magi to go by themselves, at the same time charging them to return with the information for which he had shown himself so feverishly anxious. This strange conduct can be accounted for only on the ground of a judicial blindness; but they who resort to such an explanation must suppose that it was inflicted in order to save the new-born Christ from the death thus threatened; and if they adopt this hypothesis, they must further believe that this arrangement likewise ensured the death of a large number of infants instead of one. A natural reluctance to take up such a notion might prompt the question, Why were the Magi brought to Jerusalem at all? If they knew that the star was the star of Christ (ii. 2), and were by this knowledge conducted to Jerusalem, why did it not suffice to guide them straight to Bethlehem, and thus prevent the slaughter of the innocents? Why did the star desert them after its first appearance, not to be seen again till they issued from Jerusalem? or, if it did not desert them, why did they ask of Herod and the priests the road which they should take, when, by the hypothesis, the star was ready to guide?" ("The English Life of Jesus," by Thomas Scott, pp. 34, 35; ed. 1872). To these improbabilities must be added the remarkable fact that Josephus, who gives a very detailed history of Herod, entirely omits any hint of this stupendous crime.

The story of the temptation of Jesus is full of contradictions. Matthew iv. 2, 3, implies that the first visit of the tempter was made *after* the forty days' fast, while Mark and Luke speak of his being tempted for forty days. According to Matthew, the angels came to him when the Devil left him; but, according to Mark, they ministered to him throughout. According to Matthew, the temptation to cast

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